

## Message Text

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FOL RPT STATE 161676 SENT ACTION ANKARA, ATHENS, BERN, BONN,  
BRUSSELS, CANBERRA, COPENHAGEN, DUBLIN, HELSINKI, LISBON, LONDON,  
LUXEMBOURG, MADRID, OSLO, OTTAWA, PARIS, REYKJAVIK, ROME,  
STOCKHOLM, THE HAGUE, TOKYO, VIENNA, WELLINGTON, ALGIERS INFO GENEVA,  
ABIDJAN, BELGRADE, BRASILIA, BUENOS AIRES, CAIRO, CARACAS,  
ISLAMABAD, JAKARTA, JIDDA, KINGSTON, LAGOS, MANILA, MEXICO,  
NAIROBI, NEW DELHI, QUITO & TEHRAN DTD 24 JUN 78

QUOTE: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STATE 161676

USEEC AND USOECD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN, UN, ECOSOC

SUBJECT: UN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (OVERVIEW COMMITTEE)

REF: (A) USUN 2125 (REPEATED INFO ALL POSTS);  
(B) CFR NO. 20 OF MAY 17; (C) USUN 2619 (NOTAL)

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1. SUMMARY: US CONTINUES TO BELIEVE THAT UN OVERVIEW  
COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC ISSUES CAN PLAY A KEY ROLE IN RECON-  
CILING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING  
COUNTRIES. HOWEVER, THE FIRST SUBSTANTIVE MEETING IN  
MAY ENDED IN AN IMPASSE BECAUSE G-77 TRIED TO USE IT AS  
A MECHANISM FOR EXTRACTING CONCESSIONS ACROSS THE BOARD  
RATHER THAN BUILDING ON AREAS OF AGREEMENT. USUN HAS  
SUGGESTED TO OECD DELEGATIONS IN NEW YORK SOME  
PROCEDURAL STEPS DESIGNED TO FOCUS THE COMMITTEE'S WORK  
ON AREAS WHERE CONVERGENCE IS POSSIBLE. RESPONSE IN  
NEW YORK WAS GENERALLY FAVORABLE, BUT DELEGATIONS URGED

THAT US RAISE THESE SUGGESTIONS IN CAPITALS, WHERE THERE IS CONSIDERABLY MORE SKEPTICISM ABOUT POTENTIAL USEFULNESS OF OVERVIEW COMMITTEE. POSTS ARE REQUESTED TO DISCUSS THESE ISSUES AT AN EARLY DATE WITH HOST GOVERNMENT. IF RESPONSE IS GENERALLY FAVORABLE, WE WOULD THEN DISCUSS OUR SUGGESTIONS WITH LDCS. END SUMMARY.

2. AS REPORTED IN REFS A (PARTICULARLY PARA 24) AND B AND IN OTHER MESSAGES, WE ARE SERIOUSLY CONCERNED OVER THIS UNSATISFACTORY STAND-OFF IN THE FIRST SUBSTANTIVE MEETING OF THE UNGA'S COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (OVERVIEW COMMITTEE). THIS IMPASSE RESULTED FROM BASIC DIFFERENCES IN INTERPRETATION BETWEEN WESTERN INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES AND THE G-77 ON THE ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE. WE MUST THEREFORE MAKE VERY EFFORT TO SEEK SOME COMMON GROUND WITH THE G-77 ON THE MANNER IN WHICH THE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE SHOULD OPERATE. AS THE COMMITTEE'S NEXT MEETING (SEPTEMBER 5-15) WILL BE CRITICAL, CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND THE G-77 LEADERSHIP BETWEEN NOW AND SEPTEMBER COULD PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE IN SETTING THE SCENE FOR A CONSTRUCTIVE OUTCOME.

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3. THE COMMITTEE'S MANDATE PER UNGA RESOLUTION 32/174 IS TO "...ASSIST THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY BY ACTING AS THE FOCAL POINT IN: (A) OBSERVING AND MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS AND AGREEMENTS REACHED IN THE NEGOTIATIONS ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER IN THE APPROPRIATE BODIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM; (B) PROVIDING IMPETUS FOR RESOLVING DIFFICULTIES IN NEGOTIATIONS AND FOR ENCOURAGING THE CONTINUING WORK IN THOSE BODIES; (C) SERVING, WHERE APPROPRIATE, AS A FORUM FOR FACILITATING AND EXPEDITING AGREEMENT ON THE RESOLUTION OF OUTSTANDING ISSUES; (D) EXPLORING AND EXCHANGING VIEWS ON GLOBAL ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND PRIORITIES."

4. OUR VIEW, SHARED BY MOST WESTERN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, IS THAT THE COMMITTEE SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO A GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF GLOBAL ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND LEAD TO GREATER CONVERGENCE OF VIEWS. HOWEVER, COMMITTEE SHOULD NOT REPEAT NOT ASSUME NEGOTIATING OR DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY ON ISSUES PROPERLY BELONGING TO UN OR OTHER SPECIALIZED BODIES. TO BORROW FROM THE COMMITTEE'S MANDATE, THIS ROLE IS TO "OVERSEE, MONITOR, PROVIDE IMPETUS, ENCOURAGE, FACILITATE, EXPEDITE, EXPLORE AND EXCHANGE VIEWS", BUT NOT TO SUPERVISE OR REGULATE OTHER BODIES OR PROGRAMS OF THE UN SYSTEM.

5. THE G-77 AGREE THAT THE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE SHOULD

NOT INTERVENE IN THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS IN SPECIALIZED BODIES. HOWEVER, THEY LOOK ON THE COMMITTEE AS A MEANS OF SECURING NEW COMMITMENTS FROM THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES ON SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES WHICH COULD THEN BE FLESHED OUT IN THE APPROPRIATE FORUMS. AT THE MAY SESSION THEY ATTEMPTED TO NEGOTIATE A FINAL DOCUMENT

IN WHICH THESE COMMITMENTS WOULD BE RECORDED. LACK OF AGREEMENT ON THIS DOCUMENT RESULTED IN A TIME-CONSUMING  
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NEGOTIATION OVER LANGUAGE AND AN EVENTUAL IMPASSE.

6. IF THE G-77 VIEW PREVAILED THE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE WOULD SIMPLY BE ONE MORE UN BODY (LIKE THE UNGA ITSELF) WHERE THE G-77 ATTEMPTS TO ADVANCE ITS DEMANDS BY LAUNCHING RESOLUTIONS OR OTHER DOCUMENTS EMBODYING ITS STANDARD CATALOGUE OF POSITIONS. THIS PROCESS WOULD NOT CONTRIBUTE TO ACCOMMODATION. IT ALSO COMES CLOSE TO PREEMPTING DECISION-MAKING PROPERLY BELONGING TO OTHER BODIES. WE SEE LITTLE PROSPECT OF POSITIVE RESULTS, AND THE PROCESS ILL USES THE TIME OF POLICY MAKING OFFICIALS FROM CAPITALS.

7. THE G-77, ON THE OTHER HAND, VIEW OUR POSITION ON THE OVERVIEW AS PART OF AN EFFORT TO AVOID COMING TO TERMS WITH THE G-77 AGENDA. THEY CLAIM TO BE UNSURE OF THE COMMITMENT OF DEVELOPED COUNTRIES TO WORK FOR CHANGE. HENCE THEY REGARD THE OVERVIEW PROCESS AS POINTLESS UNLESS SOME SPECIFIC RESULTS CAN BE ACHIEVED IN THE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE ITSELF.

8. IN AN EFFORT TO FIND SOME MID-POSITION ON WHICH BOTH DCS AND LDCS MIGHT BE ABLE TO AGREE, WE WISH TO EXCHANGE VIEWS WITH OTHER OECD COUNTRIES ON THE FOLLOWING IDEAS:

A. EACH SESSION OF THE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE SHOULD ATTEMPT TO IDENTIFY THOSE SUBSTANTIVE TOPICS DISCUSSED IN THE PRECEDING SESSION WHERE SOME PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE IN THE INTERVENING PERIOD THAT MIGHT BE CREDITED TO THE AIRING OF VIEWS IN THE COMMITTEE ITSELF.

B. EACH SESSION SHOULD ALSO ATTEMPT TO IDENTIFY A FEW TOPICS WHERE PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES (DCS AND LDCS  
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ALIKE) ARE PREPARED TO RESTUDY THEIR POSITIONS, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE POSITIONS OF OTHERS EXPRESSED IN THE

COMMITTEE. THESE COULD INCLUDE NOT ONLY OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS CURRENTLY BEFORE CERTAIN SPECIALIZED UN BODIES BUT ALSO ANY NEW IDEAS THAT COME UP IN THE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE. THE TOPICS IDENTIFIED SHOULD BE STRICTLY SELECTED, AVOIDING ANY ACROSS-THE-BOARD APPROACH. THE NEXT SUBSEQUENT SESSION WOULD ASSESS THE RESULTS OF ANY STUDY AND/OR RECONSIDERATION ON THE PART OF MEMBER COUNTRIES.

C. COUNTRIES SHOULD NOT AGREE TO IDENTIFY ISSUES OF THIS SORT IF THEY HAVE NO INTENTION WHATEVER OF RECONSIDERING THEIR POSITIONS. THIS WOULD SOON BE SPOTTED AS DISINGENUOUS. BY THE SAME TOKEN, A COMMITMENT TO RECONSIDER A QUESTION IN NO WAY REPRESENTS A COMMITMENT TO CHANGE ONE'S POSITION.

D. THIS PROCESS WOULD NOT REQUIRE THE ADVANCE PREPARATION OF DOCUMENTS BY PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES OR GROUPS. DRAFTS PURPORTING TO REFLECT THE OUTCOME OF THE DISCUSSION WOULD HAVE TO BE AVOIDED. A FINAL AGREED REPORT SUMMARIZING THE RANGE OF VIEWS EXPRESSED AND THE DEGREE OF CONVERGENCE THAT MIGHT HAVE EMERGED IN THE DISCUSSION WOULD BE USEFUL, BUT THE REPORT ITSELF SHOULD NOT BE USED AS A VEHICLE FOR NEGOTIATING CONCESSIONS AND COMMITMENTS. THE REPORT WOULD ALSO IDENTIFY THOSE POINTS MENTIONED IN A AND B ABOVE.

E. IN ORDER FOR THIS PROCESS TO WORK PROPERLY, LDCS WOULD HAVE TO SEND POLICY OFFICIALS FROM CAPITALS.

9. THE ABOVE PROCESS, AS WE SEE IT, WOULD ENABLE THE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE TO IDENTIFY PAST PROGRESS AS WELL AS AREAS FOR POSSIBLE FUTURE PROGRESS WITHOUT GETTING INTO THE NEGOTIATING AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES  
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BELONGING TO THE SPECIALIZED BODIES. COMMITTEE WOULD BE ABLE TO RECORD THIS IN AN AGREED DOCUMENT WHILE AT THE SAME TIME AVOIDING NEGOTIATIONS IN AREAS WHERE NO AGREEMENT IS POSSIBLE.

10. ACTION ADDRESSEE POSTS SHOULD DISCUSS THESE IDEAS WITH HOST GOVERNMENT WITH APPROPRIATE OECD AND EEC OFFICIALS, EXPLAINING THAT THESE POINTS COMPRISE AT THIS STAGE SIMPLY IDEAS FOR DISCUSSION RATHER THAN A FIRM U.S. POSITION. WE WOULD OF COURSE BE INTERESTED IN THE REACTIONS AS WELL AS ANY ALTERNATIVE IDEAS HOSTS MAY HAVE. ANY SUGGESTIONS THEY MAY WISH TO MAKE ON SUBSTANTIVE TOPICS THAT MIGHT BE IDENTIFIED IN THE SEPTEMBER SESSION ALONG THE LINES OF PARAGRAPHS 8A AND B ABOVE WOULD ALSO BE WELCOME.

11. EMBASSY ALGIERS IS REQUESTED TO CONTACT IDRIS JAZAIRY (CHAIRMAN OF THE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE) TO SIMILARLY SOUND HIM OUT ON THESE IDEAS. PLEASE IMPRESS ON HIM OUR SINCERITY IN TRYING TO FIND A FORMULA TO MAKE THE COMMITTEE WORK AND TO REALIZE ITS UNIQUE POTENTIAL TO ADVANCE THE NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE--A MATTER OF OBVIOUS CONCERN TO THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. PLEASE ALSO MENTION THAT THERE HAS BEEN SOME DISCUSSION (OR WHICH WE GATHER HE IS AT LEAST PARTLY PRIVY) OF HAVING AN INFORMAL CONSULTATIVE MEETING OF A RELATIVELY SMALL GROUP IN GENEVA DURING THE JULY ECOSOC. OUR CURRENT THINKING IS THAT, IN PREFERENCE TO THE ORIGINAL IDEA OF HAVING THIS MEETING EARLY IN THE SESSION WHEN MORE SENIOR OFFICIALS WILL BE PRESENT FOR GENERAL DEBATE, IT MIGHT BE MORE USEFUL RIGHT AFTER THE BONN SUMMIT, WITH SOME OFFICIALS COMING TO GENEVA FROM THEIR SUMMIT DELEGATIONS, E.G., JULY 19-22. WE HOPE, IN ANY EVENT, THAT JAZAIRY

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WILL BE ABLE TO ATTEND. PLEASE REPORT HIS REACTIONS.

12. IF REACTIONS FROM ACTION ADDRESSEES GENERALLY CONFIRM THE INITIAL FAVORABLE REACTIONS EXPRESSED IN NEW YORK, WE PLAN TO ASK INFO ADDRESSEES (AND PERHAPS SOME ADDITIONAL POSTS) TO MAKE SIMILAR DEMARCHES IN LDC CAPITALS. INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS WITH KEY G-77 REPRESENTATIVES PRIOR TO THE SEPTEMBER SESSION WILL OF COURSE BE ESSENTIAL TO ANY AGREEMENT ON THE CONDUCT OF THAT SESSION. ASIDE FROM THE FOREGOING, WE WOULD ALSO LOOK FORWARD TO FURTHER INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS DURING THE COURSE OF THE MONTH-LONG ECOSOC SESSION (JULY 5-AUGUST 4), TO BE SUPPLEMENTED BY COORDINATED BILATERAL CONTACTS WITH THE G-77 LEADERSHIP. VANCE UNQUOTE VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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